

GREENSBORO PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING

Wednesday, May 9, 2007 – 6:00pm

Kathleen Clay Edwards Library (Price Park) – 1420 Price Park Road

PRESENT: Paul Brown, Marc Bush (dismissed 6:12 / returned 6:15), Robert Douglas, III (dismissed 7:01), Ken Free, Lori Galbreath, David Hoggard (arrived 6:05), Rose Marie Ponton, Randy Scott

ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Candice Bruton, Jenny Caviness, Courtney Hemphill, John Hughes, Darryl Kosciak, Bonnie Kuester, Dan Maxson, Brooks Mullane, Lane Newsome, Darious Oliver, Dale Purvis (intern), Marcie Richardson, Laurie Thore, Mary Vigue (Budget & Evaluation), Chris Wilson

The regular meeting of the Greensboro Parks and Recreation Commission was held at Kathleen Clay Edwards Library. Robert Douglas, III, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the April 11, 2007 Commission Meeting were approved as submitted.

Recognition

Bonnie Kuester, Director, recognized the Parks and Recreation May Employee of the Month, Brooks Mullane.

OLD BUSINESS

War Memorial Stadium

Due to the absence of the War Memorial Stadium presenter, the Commission heard on this item later in the meeting.

GYC Carnival

Jenny Caviness, GYC Coordinator, invited the Commission to attend the GYC Carnival being held this week. Caviness thanked Lori Galbreath, Commissioner, for volunteering at the Carnival this year and thanked the Commission for their support throughout the year.

Athletic Program Privatization Update

This item was postponed to the next Commission meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

Small Neighborhood Projects Program

Candice Bruton, Strategic Planning Administrator, stated that the Small Neighborhood Projects Program is an annual program in which neighborhoods and community groups apply for funding for small projects in their neighborhoods. Bruton turned the presentation over to Russ Clegg, Housing and Community Development.

Clegg informed the Commission that three small neighborhood project applications were received this year. This program is part of the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) budget. One hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) is set aside each year for neighborhoods to apply for improvements in the neighborhood. Neighborhoods can begin submitting applications September 1st of each year.

The three applications and their requests received this year are as follows:

- Heath Park

Additional lighting, paving at entrance, a parking area, fencing around the park, new fields, and demolition of the shelter. Funding may not be available for all of these requests. The focus will be on safety issues regarding the lighting and landscape issues to improve vision of the park. It is recommended that this community work with Parks and Recreation staff to determine the needs, priorities and what source of funding is available.

Rose Marie Ponton, Commissioner, inquired about the shelter removal.

Bruton replied stating that the shelter removal would be due to the history of vandalism and graffiti. Bruton stated that this request would go through the public input process.

- Warnersville Recreation Center

Increase parking which would involve removal of the playground. The development of a site plan is recommended and then shared with the neighborhood.

- Westerwood Neighborhood

Stamped, painted crosswalks at fifteen different locations. This program will not fund these type requests and the neighborhood has been recommended to send this request to the Department of Transportation.

Action Taken

A motion was made by David Hoggard and seconded by Ken Free to recommend the small neighborhood projects be approved by City Council. A vote in favor was unanimous.

Bryan Park at Guilford County Proposal

Chris Wilson, Parks, Gardens and Program Support Manager, distributed a map showing the location of Bryan Park at Guilford County (BPGC). Wilson stated that the Commission was given a BPGC presentation the end of 2005. This 534 acre area was donated by the Bryan Foundation and is jointly owned by the City of Greensboro and Guilford County. A BPGC Master Plan was created consisting of cross country tracks, lacrosse fields and soccer fields. This parks location in Brown Summit would provide great service to the City of Greensboro and Guilford County. When this land was given there was hope that the city would be able to develop this property for opportunities as those previously mentioned. The City of Greensboro and Parks and Recreation has had to make priority choices as the department goes through the budget process. Parks and Recreation has not been able to move on BPGC to date and has not been able to secure funds this year or post master plan. Guilford County held a bond in 2000 that dedicated some dollars for BPGC and were able to move forward with a portion of that funding; however it couldn't be applied without more funds. Phase I of the Master Plan would be approximately six million dollars (\$6,000,000) and as time has passed this amount could have increased. The overall project would cost approximately twenty one million dollars (\$21,000,000).

Budget reductions were discussed during the last Commission meeting with perhaps some alternative ways to conduct business. At that time the Commission had the opportunity to recommend and make a motion. One of the recommendations was Hagan-Stone Park and to consider giving ownership to the County for several reasons. One reason is location and the ability to serve several Guilford County communities. The BPGC proposal would be similar to the operation at Bur-Mil Park, which Guilford County owns and the City of Greensboro operates.

Wilson continued stating that there has been staff discussion relative to BPGC with some consideration from the Bryan Foundation. There is some interest that if Guilford County were in position and willing to take on that operation in terms of ownerships, then perhaps it would operate just as Bur-Mil Park and potentially Hagan-Stone Park. Budgetary wise this means that perhaps BPGC could move forward with development and have the athletic fields needed sooner. It's unknown at this point if Parks and Recreation will be in a position in the near future to participate at the level necessary

for developing the property. The City Manager's Office and Parks and Recreation staff felt this item should be brought forth to the Commission for recommendation.

Marc Bush, Commissioner, asked the status of Hagan-Stone Park and could the BPGC Master Plan be changed given this is an undeveloped park unlike the already developed Bur-Mil and Hagan-Stone Parks.

Wilson replied stating there has been very positive communications with Guilford County. The County will bring this forth to the County Parks and Recreation Commission to see if there is a desire to part of that master plan equation. Wilson stated he has not received any negative feedback in discussions with the County.

Rose Marie Ponton inquired about the Bryan Foundation's thoughts.

Wilson replied stating that the Bryan Foundation would like to see this move forward and give ownership to the County and to have city coordination.

Action Taken

A motion was made by Rose Marie Ponton and seconded by David Hoggard for City Council to support the concept of transferring ownership of Bryan Park at Guilford County to Guilford County. A vote in favor was unanimous.

Sportsplex Request for Proposal

Dan Maxson, Administrative Services Manager, stated that Request for Proposals (RFP) for the Sportsplex soccer and basketball programs will be mailed to vendors in the near future. A number of years ago the Parks and Recreation Commission recommended a policy in which professional service contracts in excess of twenty thousand dollars (\$20,000) would be issued through a RFP process. Staff will send out RFP's to appropriate vendors and interested parties. Then, through an evaluation process, staff would select the contractors and then return to the Commission. The Commission will be kept informed to make sure a fair and open process is maintained. No action needs to be taken at this time. Maxson then turned the presentation over to Lane Newsome, Sportsplex Manager.

Newsome stated that RFP's are being prepared for the Sportsplex basketball and soccer programs. The basketball program is currently run by Delaney Rudd. The soccer program is run by Soccer Ops, both which have done an excellent job. The net cost of operations this year are down by one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) compared to this time last year. Basketball RFP's will be sent to Delaney Rudd's Softball and Basketball Academy and Kenny Carters Hoops and Dreams. Newsome asked the Commission to bring forth any others who may want to receive a RFP. Soccer RFP's will be sent to Guilford United, Greensboro Youth Soccer and Soccer Ops. The legal department has agreed that this contract will be a three year contract verses the current two year contract. Basketball is scheduled to begin in December of this year and soccer in June of next year. John Hughes and Marc Bush along with Newsome will sit on the RFP review committee.

Bush suggested adding the North Carolina Gators to the RFP distribution list for basketball.

Douglas stated that these RFP's are being sent out due to the ending of existing contracts.

Maxson stated that this item will return most likely in August with results from RFP Committee and their recommended selections.

Memorial Stadium Update

A report and cost estimate for the War Memorial Stadium project was distributed to the Commission. These documents are attached below and a hard copy is attached to the back of printed minutes.

On behalf of Butch Simmons, Engineering and Inspections Director, Kuester stated that the city is not in a financial position and the bond referendum was not successful to do the major renovations for the stadium. The city realizes the need to do the basic safety and maintenance. Kuester stated that areas of the stadium are in disrepair.. Having the new stadium (First Horizon Park) and no longer having professional ball at Memorial Stadium there's no need to have thousands of seats. A number of things were in mind when the city determined to send engineers, including city engineers, to look at the stadium to see what the basic price would be for accomplishing what needs to be done since Parks and Recreation is utilizing the facility regularly. Kuester then turned the presentation over to John Hughes, Youth and Community Programs Manager.

Hughes informed the Commission that the report states demolishing the left field bleachers and filling this area with ABC stone. Hughes stated that it will be recommended to have grass in this area instead in order to keep stones from washing away. This may change the cost estimate. The cost estimate was produced by the Greensboro Engineering and Inspections Department.

Kuester stated that the City Manager's Office would like the feelings of this Commission and City Council regarding the information given tonight. Hughes asked for recommendation from the Commission regarding the proposed stadium project.

Marc Bush, Commissioner, suggested that Commission members visit the stadium and see how well it's maintained, what investments have been made and see what type of facility it is hosting in amateur and collegiate baseball. Bush stated that this project is a lot of money but believes this is a reasonable investment in terms of these abilities to serve it as a baseball facility and other uses. For instance, last week the stadium was used to film part of an upcoming movie, Leatherheads, starring George Clooney and Renee Zellweger. Bush stated he solely supports this concept.

David Hoggard, Commissioner, stated there was a lot of discussion with the stadium taskforce and saving the back of the stadium. The report does not state this and is most likely not going to, but wanted to know if anyone has looked at the leaving exterior wall.

Hughes stated they looked at everything from ground up.

Douglas stated that this is probably as close as we're going to get and everyone would love to maintain the entire structure, but the voters have spoken.

Randy Scott, Commissioner, inquired as to what is the ultimate goal of the stadium once this project is complete.

Hughes replied stating that this will remain as a baseball facility.

Bush stated that he was informed that two hundred games are programmed at the stadium this year.

Paul Brown, Commissioner, inquired about the estimated time of completion.

Hughes replied stating that once funding becomes available it his understanding that this process will then begin. Part of the stadium is currently roped off due to safety concerns.



Project
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Demolish Left Field
Bleachers....

If we are going to have these documents as part of the minutes, we will need to have the text inserted here rather than the electronic files.

Action Taken

A motion was made by Marc Bush and seconded by Paul Brown to recommend City Council to support the War Memorial Stadium renovations as a minimum. The Commission voted 7-1 in favor of the motion. (Ayes: Douglas, Free, Galbreath, Scott, Brown, Bush, Ponton. Nays: Hoggard.)

At this time the Chair dismissed himself and the meeting was turned over to the Vice-Chair.

SPEAKERS FROM THE FLOOR

Patricia Alexander, 3710 Central Ave., Heath Community Organization President, spoke before the Commission in favor of removing the shelter at Heath Park.

Caitlin Spencer, 1110 Portland Street, Christine Kiernan, 302 E. Bessemer Avenue Apartment B, and Heather Doyle, 6A Springdale Court, spoke before the Commission opposing the privatization of City Arts Dance.

Ponton stated that she sees dance at the same level as athletics.

Kuester stated that the department has always been very successful in terms of privatization and were so in the Visual Arts aspect of the arts program years ago. The City Manager's Office encouraged the department to bring the dance program to the table because they knew of our past privatization successes and views this as an opportunity in an incredibly severe budget crunch year. We have had a dynamic arts program in this City and Parks and Recreation for years. This department has won many awards over the years with one of the key elements being the diversity of our programming. Kuester stated that if there's another way City Council instructs Parks and Recreation to take care of this program that would be the departments charge. Because the speakers have come before the Commission it would be the role of the Commission to communicate the speakers' feelings and to report to City Council that this Commission has heard from speakers on this particular item. The Parks and Recreation Department always wants our Commission to send word to City Council from any citizen group that comes before the Commission. The speakers' views are also reflected in our meeting minutes which are also shared with the City Manager's Office.

DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS

Bonnie Kuester stated that the Commission received a copy of the proposed revision of the Parks and Recreation Rules and Regulations. Kuester asked the Commission to review the information as it will be brought back to the next Commission meeting for suggestions or Commission support.

Rose Marie Ponton suggested including the tobacco free zone rule.

Kuester stated that the June 13, 2007 Commission meeting was originally scheduled to be held at Caldcleugh Multi-Cultural Center at 4:00. Due to the Southwest Recreation Master Plan presentation at this meeting, the meeting has been relocated to Trotter Recreation Center and will begin at 6:00.

Kuester invited the Commission to attend upcoming banquets with GYC and Youth First. This Friday a ribbon cutting ceremony will be at Hunter Elementary School for joint efforts with the City of Greensboro, Guilford County and Guilford County Schools in terms of park development.

Kuester stated that a tentative date has been set for the Commission Tour scheduled for May 24, 2007. Due to conflicts with Commissioners it was decided that the tour will be rescheduled for another date.

COMMISSIONER'S COMMENTS

Randy Scott stated he will support War Memorial Stadium any way he can.

Marc Bush mentioned the Triad Highland Games at Bryan Park were held the previous Friday and Saturday and the girl's fast pitch softball at Carolyn Allen Park. Bush attended the Parisian Promenade and stated it is a neat event. Events such as this can't be held without Parks and Recreation facilities with both staff and volunteers to put these events together. Bush informed the Commission that the opening ceremony for the State Games will be held Friday, June 22nd at the Aggie Stadium with hopes of Mayor Holliday lighting the caldron. A reception will begin at 6:00 pm and the open ceremony to begin at 7:00.

Lori Galbreath stated that she has visited Country Park over the last six weeks as a couple of her neighbors have formed a walking club. Galbreath commended Chris Wilson and staff for their efforts with County Park. Galbreath stated that she will volunteer at the GYC Carnival.

Paul Brown requested that a brief history of the Commission meeting facility/location be presented at future Commission meetings. Brown stated that he and his wife took part in the production of the movie Leatherheads.

Maxson gave a brief history of this meeting location.

David Hoggard stated he attended and enjoyed the Parisian Promenade.

With no further business Hoggard adjourned the meeting at 7:29 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Marcie Richardson, Executive Assistant
Greensboro Parks and Recreation